

Date: February 2, 2023

Bill number: HB 0170

Committee: House Judiciary Committee

Bill title: **Minors Convicted as Adults – Sentencing – Transfer to Juvenile Court**

DHS Position: **LETTER OF INFORMATION**

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide a Letter of Information for House Bill 170.

House Bill 170 provides the Court with a pathway to transfer a juvenile's sentencing in certain circumstances to juvenile court and to consider the impact of trauma on an adolescent when determining the outcome of a minor when convicted. Research identifies child maltreatment as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE). As an individual's ACE score increases, so does the risk of disease, social and emotional struggles. This bill allows for a judge to take into consideration Adverse Childhood Experiences that could have impacted the youth's commitment of a crime.

House Bill 170 is aligned with DHS's Integrated Practice Model (IPM) that juvenile court providers have been trained on as valued partners in DHS's service delivery. Providing a trauma responsive approach supports the young person and may mitigate additional trauma if sentenced as an adult.

DHS's commitment to the IPM ensures each child or adolescent and their families are assessed for the likelihood that trauma has played a role in their lives. DHS welcomes an opportunity to work with all members of the General Assembly as it relates to providing trauma informed or a trauma responsive approach to working with children, adolescents and their families.

The Department is grateful to offer this letter of information for HB 108 and welcomes the opportunity to discuss further.